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Agenda item 69 (*b*)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 18 December 2013

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/68/456/Add.2)*]

68/163. The safety of journalists and the issue of impunity

The General Assembly,

Guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations,

Reaffirming the Universal Declaration of Human Rights[1] and recalling relevant international human rights treaties, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights[2] and the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance,[3] as well as the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949[4] and the Additional Protocols thereto,[5]

Recalling the United Nations Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity, endorsed by the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination on 12 April 2012, in which United Nations agencies, funds and programmes were invited to work with Member States towards a free and safe environment for journalists and media workers in both conflict and non-conflict situations, with a view to strengthening peace, democracy and development worldwide,

Recalling also Human Rights Council resolutions 20/8 of 5 July 2012 on the promotion, protection and enjoyment of human rights on the Internet,[6] 21/12 of 27 September 2012 on the safety of journalists,[7] and 24/15 of 27 September 2013 on the World Programme for Human Rights Education[8] and Council decision 24/116 of

[1] Resolution 217 A (III).

[2] See resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

[3] Resolution 61/177, annex.

[4] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, Nos. 970-973.

[5] Ibid., vol. 1125, Nos. 17512 and 17513.

[6] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 53* and corrigendum (A/67/53 and Corr.1), chap. IV, sect. A.

[7] Ibid., *Supplement No. 53A* (A/67/53/Add.1), chap. III.

[8] Ibid., *Sixty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 53A* (A/68/53/Add.1), chap. III.

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26 September 2013 on a panel discussion on the safety of journalists,[9] as well as Security Council resolution 1738 (2006) of 23 December 2006,

Taking note of the reports of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression[10] and the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions,[11] submitted to the Human Rights Council at its twentieth session,

Commending the role and the activities of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization with regard to the safety of journalists and the issue of impunity,

Taking note with appreciation of the report of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights on good practices concerning the safety of journalists,[12] submitted to the Human Rights Council at its twenty-fourth session,

Noting with appreciation the international conference on the safety of journalists, held in Warsaw on 23 and 24 April 2013, and its specific recommendations,[13]

Acknowledging that journalism is continuously evolving to include inputs from media institutions, private individuals and a range of organizations that seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, online as well as offline, in the exercise of freedom of opinion and expression, in accordance with article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, thereby contributing to shape public debate,

Recognizing the relevance of freedom of expression and of free media in building inclusive knowledge societies and democracies and in fostering intercultural dialogue, peace and good governance,

Recognizing also that the work of journalists often puts them at specific risk of intimidation, harassment and violence,

Taking note of the good practices of different countries aimed at the protection of journalists, as well as, inter alia, those designed for the protection of human rights defenders that can, where applicable, be relevant to the protection of journalists,

Recognizing that the number of people whose lives are influenced by the way information is presented is significant and that journalism influences public opinion,

Bearing in mind that impunity for attacks against journalists constitutes one of the main challenges to strengthening the protection of journalists,

Recalling in this regard that journalists, media professionals and associated personnel engaged in dangerous professional missions in areas of armed conflict shall be considered as civilians and shall be respected and protected as such, provided that they take no action adversely affecting their status as civilians,

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[9] Ibid., chap. IV.

[10] A/HRC/20/17.

[11] A/HRC/20/22 and Corr.1.

[12] A/HRC/24/23.

[13] See S/2013/422, annex.

Expressing concern at the threat to the safety of journalists posed by non-State actors, including terrorist groups and criminal organizations,

Acknowledging the specific risks faced by women journalists in the exercise of their work, and underlining, in this context, the importance of taking a gender-sensitive approach when considering measures to address the safety of journalists,

1. *Takes note with appreciation* of the United Nations Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity;

2. *Condemns unequivocally* all attacks and violence against journalists and media workers, such as torture, extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances and arbitrary detention, as well as intimidation and harassment in both conflict and non-conflict situations;

3. *Decides* to proclaim 2 November as the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists;

4. *Requests* the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, in consultation with relevant entities of the United Nations system, and mindful of the provisions of the annex to Economic and Social Council resolution 1980/67 of 25 July 1980, to facilitate the implementation of the International Day in collaboration with Governments and relevant stakeholders;

5. *Urges* Member States to do their utmost to prevent violence against journalists and media workers, to ensure accountability through the conduct of impartial, speedy and effective investigations into all alleged violence against journalists and media workers falling within their jurisdiction and to bring the perpetrators of such crimes to justice and ensure that victims have access to appropriate remedies;

6. *Calls upon* States to promote a safe and enabling environment for journalists to perform their work independently and without undue interference, including by means of: (*a*) legislative measures; (*b*) awareness-raising in the judiciary and among law enforcement officers and military personnel, as well as among journalists and in civil society, regarding international human rights and humanitarian law obligations and commitments relating to the safety of journalists; (*c*) the monitoring and reporting of attacks against journalists; (*d*) publicly condemning attacks; and (*e*) dedicating the resources necessary to investigate and prosecute such attacks;

7. *Invites* the relevant agencies, organizations, funds and programmes of the United Nations system to consider identifying focal points for the exchange of information about the implementation of the United Nations Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity, in cooperation with Member States and under the overall coordination of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization;

8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session on the implementation of the present resolution.

70th plenary meeting
18 December 2013